

Application No. 10/771,835
Amendment dated August 16, 2006
Reply to Office Action of March 22, 2006

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are pending.

Claims 1-4, 8, 12, 13, 16, 17 and 20 stand rejected.

Claims 5, 9-11, 14, 15, 18 and 20 are objected to.

Claims 1, 2, 6, 10, 19 and 20 have been amended.

Claims 4, 5 and 9 have been cancelled without prejudice.

Claims 1-3, 6-8 and 10-20 are hereby submitted for review and consideration.

No new matter has been added.

In the Office Action, the Examiner has objected to claims 2 and 19 for containing minor informalities. Applicant has amended claims 2 and 19 accordingly and respectfully requests that the objection to these claims be withdrawn.

Turning to the substantive rejections, the Examiner has rejected claims 1 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Brown (U.S. Patent No. 3,620,637). Claim 20 is rejected as being anticipated by Gibbs (U.S. Patent No. 6,905,486). Claims 1-4 are also rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schenk et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,895,389) in view of Wilson (U.S. Patent No. 5,197,967). Claims 7 and 8 are rejected as being unpatentable over Brown. Claim 12 is rejected as being unpatentable over Brown in view of Schaffner (U.S. Patent No. 4,212,639). Claim 13 is rejected as being unpatentable over Brown and Schaffner, further in view of Christianson et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,019,827). Claim 16 is rejected as being unpatentable over Brown in view of Schultz (U.S. Patent No. 6,585,143). Claim 17 is rejected as being unpatentable over Brown and Schultz, further in view of Christianson.

Although Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's contentions, in

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order to expedite the prosecution of the present invention, the allowable subject matter of claim 5 (as well as antecedent elements from original claim 4) have been amended into independent claims 1 and 20. Also, the allowable subject matter of claim 9 has been amended into independent claim 6.

As such, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of independent claims 1, 6 and 20 be withdrawn. Also, as claims 2-3, 7-8 and 10-19 depend from claims 1 and 6 respectively, the rejection of these claims should be withdrawn as well.

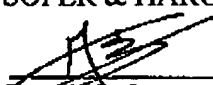
In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that the present invention as claimed is now in condition for allowance, the earliest possible notice of which is earnestly solicited. If the Examiner feels that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of this application she is invited to contact the undersigned at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted

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